

Lesson 6 Proclamation

Acts 2.14-41

I. Introduction **verse 14**

A. But Peter...

There is a point of contrast between the tumult and riotous nature of those who responded to the sound like a mighty rushing wind who came running to see what was going on and became confused and mystified – and humored – when they heard the disciples speaking in languages that each could understand, and the calm, controlled demeanor of Peter as he commanded their attention.

B. Stood up

1. Meaning is “to stand, stand by; immovable; firm; ready and prepared; steadfast.”
2. He was firm in his conviction and prepared to defend the behavior of his companions.
3. He stood with the eleven. The opposite of “stood” is “fell down.” Since none of them were falling down, it is obvious they were not drunk.
4. It may be that as Peter preached, the eleven translated the message so that all could understand.

C. Spoke up

1. Shouted above the tumult.
2. He needed to get the attention of those who doubted and those who were busy demeaning what they saw.

D. Spoke out

1. He “**said unto them.**” The word here refers, not to ordinary everyday speech, but to a dignified, elevated discourse.
2. It is the same word used in verse 4, “they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them *utterance*.” They did not speak in words that could not be understood.
3. They spoke, as did Peter in this sermon, with “deliberate, understandable words energized directly by the Holy Spirit.” (Z)

II. Explanation **verses 15-21**

A. Target audience

1. Scoffers
2. Seekers
3. Sinners

B. Text, *Joel 2.28-32*

1. Answer to Scoffers

- a. Could not be drunk; only third hour (900 AM). Would not make sense today.
- b. Quoted from Joel 2.28-32 as evidence.
 - 1) Here is evidence that, when the Holy Spirit of God enters the picture and becomes actively involved in people's lives, there are "extraordinary phenomena" that accompany Him.
 - 2) Events were in two categories
 - a) Prophecy, seeing visions, dreaming dreams
 - b) Terrific events taking place in nature: blood and fire, pillars of smoke, the sun to darkness, moon into blood.
 - 3) So there is no reason to make fun of these people who are responding exactly as God said they would.

The utterances of these simple Galileans and their behavior that seemed so erratic and out of place were not unusual happenings when God is moving among His people.
 - 4) Though the Bible does not tell us so directly, maybe what the disciples were saying were prophecies and the expressions of visions.

2. Answer to Seekers

- a. Some among the crowd asked, "What does all of this mean?"
- b. Notice that, while Peter quoted from Joel, he did not get it exactly right. He added some words, changed some words, and left others out. Not errors, but explanations and commentary.
 - 1) Changed the word "afterward" to "in the last days."
 - 2) Added "saith God."
 - 3) **V. 18**, added "and they shall prophecy."
 - 4) Used "saved" instead of "delivered."
- c. Peter quoted from Joel 2 without any explanation other than to say that these words were actually from God through Joel.

Inspiration was taken for granted without any attempt at justifying the concept. What Joel said is what God said.
- d. I will pour out my Spirit – "It conveys also the idea of communicating largely, or freely, as water is poured freely from a fountain. Titus 3:5,6, "The renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly."

- e. Peter's purpose in the quote seemed to be to press upon the listener's the urgency of the hour. God had poured out His Spirit, marking the beginning of "the age of fulfillment."
- f. There was certainly much to be understood, e.g. the physical features of Joel's prophecy for which Peter made no attempt to explain, but this was the beginning of the end – of the last days.
- g. The Messianic Age – the Church Age – will end in the physical return of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom on the earth.
- h. In fact, this entire part of the message was prophetic.
 - 1) Began with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (the first aspect of Joel's prophecy)
 - 2) It ends with events that will not take place until after the 6th seal is opened in Rev. 6.12.

3. Address to Sinners

- a. Peter ended this first part of his sermon, the **Explanation**, with the last verse from Joel. **Verse 21**
- b. Joel's prophecy dealt with a time of judgment and a demonstration of the wrath of God, so his use of this verse was more about preservation than about salvation.
- c. In the context of Peter's message, the same thing can be said about his use of this verse in Acts 2.21. The end times began on the day of Pentecost. God was at work now, building His church. Once that task is completed, God will wrap things up with the return of Christ, the deliverance of the Church, and God's wrath on those who have rejected Christ as Lord.

The only means of preservation from God's wrath is through salvation promised to "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord."

Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

III. Proclamation **verses 22-36**

A. Target audience (cf. **Acts 1.8**)

- 1. **Verse 14** Ye men of Judea, all ye that dwell at Jerusalem
- 2. **Verse 22** Ye men of Israel
- 3. **Verse 29** Men and brethren

B. Teaching concerning Christ

Peter called had shouted for them to "hearken to my words" in v. 14. Now, in v. 22, he calls for them to pay attention by calling out "hear these words."

Then he preached unto them Jesus – the focal point of the message of salvation and the final revelation of God to man.

1. Approved by God verse 22

- a. This Jesus of Nazareth, for whom you had so little respect, is in fact the Messiah.
- b. God proved this to you by performing miracles, wonders, and signs.
- c. He did this in your midst. With your own eyes and ears you witnessed Jesus do things that, before you knew Him, you have attributed only to God.
- d. Here is the evidence to support His claim to the Messiahship.

2. Appointed by God verse 23

- a. Jesus was delivered “*by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.*”
- b. It was important for these Jews to understand that what happened to Jesus was not the consequence of random events in history or subject to the will and whims of man, but were determined in eternity past by the counsel or intentional plan and purpose of God.
- c. The words *determinate counsel* refer to intention and purpose and a plan. The death of Jesus was determined by God before it happened. He was not compelled to do it, but by His own determination decided on the time, the place, and the manner of Jesus’ death.

cf. **1 Peter 1.18-20**

And the counsel of God cannot be changed – it is immutable (**Heb. 6.17**).

- d. The word *foreknowledge*, in simplest terms, means knowledge had ahead of time.

Yet in light of the omniscience of God, such knowledge cannot be contingent, or dependent on circumstances. The word makes reference to events that are certain because they were determined beforehand by the counsel of God.

Such events are not the result merely of man’s will, but of “will directed by a wise foreknowledge of what would be best.” (Alfred Barnes)

Isaiah 46:9-10 I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

3. Resurrected by God verse 24

- a. God approved of Jesus as the Messiah, He appointed Him to this position before the foundation of the world, and finally, He resurrected Jesus from the dead.
- b. “It was not possible that he should be held by it” is a statement of deity.

- c. Jesus may have been a man, living in flesh as do all men and tempted as all men are yet without sin, and as man, could experience the pain of death.

But God cannot die and was thus resurrected from the grave.

C. Text, *Psalm 16.8-11 verses 25-28, 31, 2 Sam. 23.2, Ps. 132.11 verse 30, Ps. 118.33 verse 33, Ps. 110.1 verse 34-35*

In the next 12 verses, Peter speaks directly to the Jewish characteristic of his congregation.

He continues to quote from OT in several places in order to make his point that King David had written many prophecies concerning the Messiah and that these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus whom they crucified.

1. **Peter** makes the analogy between David's prediction and its fulfillment in Jesus and the events witnessed by the listeners.

In **verse 25b**, Peter quotes David as saying, "*I foresaw the Lord before my face.*" (**Ps. 16.8a**)

Acts 2.32, Peter says that we have seen the risen Lord stand before us. We are eye-witnesses to this fact.

In **verse 25c**, Peter quotes David as saying, "*He is on my right hand.*" (**Ps. 16.8b**)

Acts 2.33a, Peter says that Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God.

In **verse 25d**, Peter quotes David as saying, "*I shall not be moved.*" (**Ps. 16.8c**)

Acts 2.33b, Peter says we have received the promised Holy Spirit. Here we stand in His strength and authority.

In **verse 26**, Peter quotes David, "*My heart rejoiced, my tongue was glad.*" (to exult, to leap for joy, to be ecstatic) (**Ps. 16.9**)

Acts 2.33c, Peter says that God has shed forth (poured out) His Spirit on us and yes, we were filled with joy and our tongues were loosed by the experience, as you both saw and heard.

*In **Psalm 16.9**, David said, "My heart is glad, my glory (soul) rejoiceth, my flesh rests in hope."*

*In **verse 26**, Peter said, "My heart rejoiceth, my tongue was glad, my flesh rests in hope."*

Once again, Peter did not quote David exactly, but the sentiment of the message is the same. The word "glad" means "to exult, to leap for joy, to be ecstatic."

Peter says that Jesus fulfilled His promise of the Holy Spirit, He has filled the hearts of the disciples, and their tongues are loosed as a result.

It's what happens to those who surrender themselves to the lordship of Christ and to the control of the Holy Spirit.

*In **verse 28**, Peter says, "You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence." (ESV)*

2. **Patriarch verse 29**

- a. There is historical significance in quoting from David – He is their patriarch.
 - 1) The king from whom all other kings will forever be chosen to rule Israel
 - 2) Founder of the nation as a power among nations
- b. David could not have been referring to himself in these verses, because, as everyone knew who was standing there that day, David had died and was buried and his grave was nearby to prove it.
- c. ***“dead and buried and his grave is with us unto this day.”***

3. **Prophet verse 30**

- a. Spiritual significance – David wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (**2 Sam. 23.2**), giving him the credentials of a prophet
- b. God had spoken to him concerning the promise that the Messiah would come from his descendants. (**Psalm 132.11**)
- c. God had also spoken through him in **Psalm 16.10**.
- d. Jesus promised that, when the Holy Spirit comes, He will remind you of the things that I have taught you.

Now, Peter recalls that earlier in Jesus' ministry, (**Mark 12.36**), Jesus quoted **Psalm 110.1** and applied it to Himself, verifying that David was not only a king, but also a prophet.

- e. In **Luke 24.44**, Jesus said that every prophecy that was written concerning Him “in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

4. **Predicted verse 31 “seeing this before”**

- a. **Psalm 110.1**
- b. As a prophet, God allowed David to understand that the Messiah would be resurrected from the dead, which means He would have to suffer death – something the Jews could not understand.

5. **Proof verse 34-35**

- a. You know that David did not ascend into heaven, therefore the Lord he is referring to in this text (**Psalm 16**) must be Jesus, the Christ.
- b. The person chosen to be king was not fully the king until he had gone through the ceremonies and the coronation that marked his position and authority.
- c. David predicted and the events of the last few weeks had proven that Jesus was indeed the Christ, that He is the One who is seated at the right hand of the Father, and that there was judgment awaiting those who rejected Him as well as salvation and deliverance for those who declared His lordship.

- d. With this preponderance of evidence, Peter declares in **verse 36** that God had made Jesus both Lord and Christ – He met every requirement that Scripture had set forth as necessary to be recognized as the Messiah.

IV. Accusation

Peter, along with the other disciples, has been emboldened by the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Once afraid of a lowly servant maiden to the point that he denied even knowing Jesus, He now stands boldly before this throng of Jews to declare that they are guilty.

1. Verse 23

- a. The first part of this verse spoke of the determinate counsel of God – that the crucifixion of Jesus was no happenstance of history, but was decided before the world was ever created.
- b. Now we see the second aspect of this verse as a clear indictment of God against those guilty of carrying out this plan: ***You have taken (Jesus), and by wicked hands (referring to the Romans) have crucified and slain (him).***
- c. Here, once again, as we have seen in the lessons of Joseph and Habakkuk, the two elements of life's workings – a paradox that seems to be just beyond the horizon of full comprehension – how the predetermined plan of God is the driving power and the required motivation in all that happens in the affairs of men, yet all of these things come to fruition by men expressing their own human freedom in decision-making.
- d. God doesn't need man to carry out His plans in the world. He could achieve them with just a spoken word. And there are times He has acted just so. But one thing that is certain is that God uses men to accomplish His mission – He works through His creation to achieve His plans.
- e. When any man gets saved, it is the miraculous, supernatural power of God at work in his life. Yet it will come to pass only in response to the Word of God being shared in verbal or written form by one man to another. (***Romans 10.14-17***)
- f. Here in this verse is an example of how the freewill decisions of man simply fulfill the predetermined counsel of God. Yet those decisions are subject to the judgment of God and He will punish and reward accordingly.

2. Verse 36

- a. Peter closes the **Proclamation** aspect of his sermon with a second accusation.
- b. Following David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, the prophet Nathan (***2 Sam. 12.7***) stood in the presence of the king. The Bible doesn't say so, but I believe Nathan boldly pointed his finger at David and clearly expressed David's guilt in the matter by saying to David, "Thou are the man."

And Nathan's boldness inspired the desired response in David.

David could have had Nathan killed on the spot, but he reacted as God intended by repenting and confessing his sin.

God had the right to kill David, but in response to his repentance, God spared his life, though there were serious consequences for his actions.

- c. Now, Peter, standing boldly (v. 14) before those who crucified the Lord Jesus, declared them guilty. God had declared Jesus to be both Lord and Christ, and they had crucified Him.

V. Invitation **Verses 37-39**

Peter's message, inspired by the Holy Spirit, had its intended response.

A. Plea (v. 37)

1. Some of those who listened got the message and asked a second question. Their first question was "What does all of this mean?"
2. Now they are asking, "What shall we do?"

B. Process (v. 38)

Peter had already made one invitation to call upon the Lord for salvation. Now he makes a second appeal for them to respond to this call through...

1. Repentance & baptism (the response of man to God's call)
2. For the remission of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit (God's response to man's obedience)

C. Promise (v. 39)

1. This is the beginning of God's construction plan for the church. He laid the foundation in the lives of the Apostles and empowered them to carry the message to those who stood before them.
2. Now, God extends the building to include these men, their children, and "all that afar off" – a prophecy of the inclusion of Gentiles and all people – "as many as the Lord, our God, shall call."

VI. Reaction **Verse 40-41**

- A. Peter continued to speak to the crowd, possibly answering more questions, until he closed the session with one final appeal: ***"Save yourselves from this untoward (skolios: crooked, perverse, wicked) generation."*** (Generation: age or period of time, typically 30-33 years. In other words, now is the time to start over with a clean slate.)
- B. And around 3000 people were baptized and added to the church.